

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-14

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P 012014Z AUG 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

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E.O. 11652:

TAGS:

SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS PROGRAM UNDER SECTION 116(E) OF THE
FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT/CENTER FOR LAW AND SOCIAL POLICY

1. UNDER SECTION 116(E) OF THE FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT
AID IS REQUIRED TO SUPPORT PROGRAMS THAT ENCOURAGE OR PRO-
MOTE INCREASED ADHERENCE TO CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS,
AS SET FORTH IN THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS,
IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. IN CARRYING OUT THIS PROGRAM,
AID IS BARRED FROM ALLOWING ITS FUNDS TO BE USED, DIRECTLY
OR INDIRECTLY, TO INFLUENCE THE OUTCOME OF ANY ELECTION
IN ANY COUNTRY.

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2. AID HAS RECEIVED A REQUEST FROM THE CENTER FOR LAW
AND SOCIAL POLICY TO SUPPORT A NEW ACTIVITY OF THE CENTER,
TO BE DIRECTED BY LEONARD MEEKER, FORMER LEGAL ADVISOR TO
THE DEPARTMENT, WHO DIRECTS THE CENTER'S INTERNATIONAL
WORK. THE CENTER IS A WELL ESTABLISHED WASHINGTON-BASED
PUBLIC INTEREST LAW ORGANIZATION WHICH IS INDEPENDENT OF
THE USG AND FREQUENTLY TAKES PUBLIC STANDS AGAINST THE USG.

3. THE CENTER PROPOSES TO DEVELOP CONTACTS BETWEEN THEMSELVES AND LAWYER GROUPS OR INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS OF THE BAR

IN OTHER COUNTRIES WHO ASSIST IN UNPOPULAR CAUSES WHERE POLITICAL AND CIVIL RIGHTS RECOGNIZED IN THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS ARE AT ISSUE. THE ULTIMATE OBJECT OF THE PROJECT IS TO PROVIDE FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO INDIVIDUAL LAWYERS AND BAR ASSOCIATIONS ENGAGED IN HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVITIES.

4. THE PRESENT REQUEST TO AID IS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO ENABLE THE CENTER TO SEND A LAWYER TO DISCUSS LOCAL INTEREST IN THIS PROGRAM IN SELECTED COUNTRIES IN LATIN AMERICA AND AFRICA AND TO FOLLOW THROUGH WHERE APPROPRIATE. THE AFRICAN COUNTRIES CHOSEN BY THE CENTER ARE GHANA, SIERRA LEONE, AND ZAIRE. EMBASSIES IN GHANA AND SIERRA LEONE HAVE APPROVED. BECAUSE OF SITUATION IN ZAIRE, THIS COUNTRY MAY BE DEFERRED. THE ARA COUNTRIES ARE ARGENTINA, CHILE, URUGUAY, NICARAGUA, AND GUATEMALA. THE SELECTION DOES NOT INDICATE A DETERMINATION THAT THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN THOSE COUNTRIES IS JUDGED TO BE POOR. ON THE CONTRARY, THE CENTER'S PROGRAM IS BASED ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT THE SITUATION WILL BE GOOD ENOUGH FOR LEGAL REPRESENTATION TO BE POSSIBLE AND EFFECTIVE IN PROMOTING JUSTICE.

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5. THE CENTER WILL BE INDEPENDENT OF DIRECT USG CONTROL AND WILL NOT SEEK OR EXPECT LOGISTIC OR OTHER ASSISTANCE FROM THE EMBASSY OR USAID, ALTHOUGH THEY WILL WELCOME CONTACT IF THE EMBASSY OR USAID WISHES TO BE IN TOUCH WITH THEM.

6. ACTION REQUESTED: AT PRESENT, AID, HA, AF, AND ARA SUPPORT THE IDEA IN PRINCIPLE. PLEASE ADVISE NOT LATER THAN 8 AUGUST YOUR CONCURRENCE IN MEEKER'S VISIT SOMETIME DURING NEXT 6 MONTHS FOR PURPOSES DESCRIBED PARA 3 ABOVE.

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